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ABSTRACT

Proximity to urban areas, a high employment rate, development of natural resources and high academic achievement are all serving to bring Laguna Pueblo to a period of rapid change on the reservation. While working to realize its potential in the areas of natural resources, commercialism and education, the Pueblo must also confront the problems of housing shortages, adoption of non-Indian priorities, and loss of Laguna traditions and language. The strongest unifying forces on the reservation are the traditional religious activities and strong matrilineal clan system; both remain active and important parts of Laguna life. Much of the change on the reservation stems from the development of its natural resources. The uranium mine offers high wages and is causing many people to return to the reservation. Plans are also underway to develop a total agricultural system. Because of the stress and importance placed on education, Laguna is number one nationally among Indian tribes on the basis of academic achievement. This report on Laguna Pueblo includes information on its natural resources, population, employment sources and opportunities, service delivery, community facilities, social services, educational system, and tribal and village government structures. (DS)

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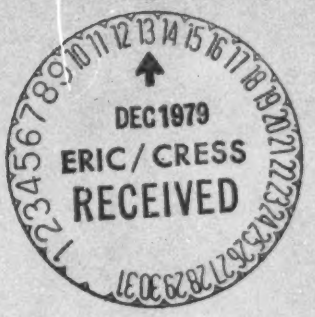

The Pueblo of Laguna

Barbetta L. Lockart

1979

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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The Pueblo of Laguna is located approximately 45 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and 30 miles east of Grants, New Mexico, along the valley of the Rio San Jose, and encompasses about 465,000 acres. The Pueblo is easily accessible by Interstate Highway 40, and therefore does not present the isolated conditions that might be found on other Indian lands (see attachments 1 and 2).

Three types of topography and climate may be found within the reservation boundaries. These include: mountainous areas adjacent to Mt. Taylor, plateaus, and valleys. The plateau and valley areas receive about nine inches of precipitation annually, and have a mean temperature of 75°. The mountainous areas average approximately twelve inches of moisture, and have temperatures between 68° - 72°.

The land offers a number of natural resources, including gypsum, natural gas (traces), oil (traces), coal, and uranium. At present, uranium is being mined very successfully, and there are plans to develop some of the other resources. The other very important natural resource that is being developed is the land itself. There are plans to further develop the reservation's agricultural potential in the near future, and Laguna is one of the only Indian groups to be involved in the development of a total agricultural system.

The resident population of the Pueblo (January 1978) is

close to 6,059 (see attachments 3 and 4). Those Lagunas living on the reservation are dispersed throughout the villages: Paguate, Encinal, Seama, Mesita, Paraje, New Laguna, and Casa Blanca.

However, there are nearly 2,000 Lagunas living off the reservation in the satellite colonies of Winslow, Arizona, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Richmond, California, Barstow, California, as well as in other urban areas. There are approximately 4,900 Lagunas on the Tribal rolls (1/2 Laguna or more), and close to 7,900 people with Laguna blood.. Family sizes vary, with those homes where the parents are in their 40's - 50's having five to six children, and homes with younger parents having two to three children.

The population is increasing not only because of the number of births, but also because of the economic draw of the uranium mine: many people are returning to the Pueblo because of the high wages paid at the mine. The mine provides employment for approximately 250 Laguna men and women. In addition, there are 350 people employed by the Tribe (450-500 in the summer months), and this helps keep the resident population high.

Other sources of employment at Laguna include: BIA, public schools (Laguna-Acoma high school), local merchants, Continental Oil Company, Gas Company of New Mexico, U.S. Indian Health Service, New Mexico Highway Department, various construction projects, and other mines. The cities of Grants and

Albuquerque are within commuting distance, and a number of Lagunas work in these areas. There are also commercial and educational projects in various stages of planning and implementation which will provide additional employment opportunities on the reservation.

There is high employment on the reservation, with most of the unemployment occurring among women, youth and drop-outs. There are programs at Laguna {CETA, Indian Action Program, and on-the-job-training opportunities} that are working successfully to lower the unemployment rate even further.

There are of course, some welfare cases that exist at least partially because of unemployment, but Laguna has fewer welfare recipients than many reservations. Pride is important to members of the Pueblo, and to receive "hand-outs" is not in keeping with tradition. Also, there is still a family unity that demands that everyone help out, therefore negating the need for welfare.

With the return of many Lagunas to the Pueblo, some problems have developed, not the least of which is a shortage of adequate housing. In order to help alleviate the problem, 205 homes have just been completed, and there are renovation programs, initial housing completion programs, elderly housing programs, and possibly HUD community development block grants available which will further help the situation.

The new houses have been completed and moved into, and utilities hooked up: telephone, water, sewer, electricity, and natural gas (except at Paguate and Encinal which use propane) are available all over the reservation. There has been no real inconvenience in moving to the new housing; it seems the only utility that was slow being hooked up was the telephone, and that is true almost anywhere. Private homes are being connected to the natural gas lines on a continual basis, and in time all Tribal buildings will be using this resource.

Streets and roads are being built and improved continuously on the reservation. Not all reservation roads are paved, but village roads are included in the next paving project. To date approximately 17.4 miles of roads remain unpaved at Laguna. Road maintenance and construction is a joint effort between the Tribe and the BIA and seems successful.

The Tribe provides emergency services (fire, ambulance, police; the latter consists of seventeen men providing protection seven days a week, 24 hours a day, residential and range patrols) to the reservation, and there is located at the Pueblo a Public Health Clinic, and the nearby ACL (Acoma-Canoncito-Laguna) Hospital. There is also a rehabilitation center which houses the Tribal courts, jail, work release program counseling program, and probation offices.

Among other community facilities are: Tribal warehouses, Tribal garages, gas stations, stores, village community centers, headstart center, Tribal offices, recreation centers (pool,

tennis courts, basketball courts), baseball and basketball areas, village community parks, electronics plant (vacated, now used for the temporary housing of new programs/organizations), and churches (Catholic, Baptist, Protestant, and Mormon religions are prevalent on the reservation, coexisting with the Tribal religion). Community buildings and facilities are constantly being renovated and improved, and restoration projects for religious structures are also underway.

The people of the Pueblo also have available to them various social services. Facilities and programs provide the community members with assistance with welfare, mental health counseling, family planning, health counseling, safety education, problems of the elderly, recreation, and rehabilitation. There is also an entire educational department set up within the Tribe which includes the special education program, headstart, CETA, adult education, vocational technology schools, and higher education scholarships.

Laguna is equal to the Navajo when it comes to the amount of stress and importance that is attached to education. Laguna has a high number of college graduates, and is number one nationally among Indian tribes on the basis of academic achievement. There are Lagunas both on and off the reservation who hold AA, BA, MA, and PhD degrees. There are also a number of Lagunas who have completed different types of vocational training and on-the-job-training programs, resulting in a large number of skilled and semi-skilled workers. As a result of the value education

is given by members of the Pueblo, there is a demand for curriculum changes at the local public high school in order to more adequately meet the needs of the Indian students. More emphasis is being called for in the areas of career planning and counseling, college preparatory courses, basic education, and possibly elementary-high school transition courses to help ease the adjustment period most students go through when they find themselves in high school immediately after elementary school. A middle school has also been requested to help alleviate this problem and the overcrowding of L-A High School. It is hoped that this school will be soon in the coming as it is drastically needed.

Whether they graduated from L-A High School or from other high schools, there are a number of Lagunas who have entered the professional world and are working on or near the reservation in such positions as teachers, school administrators, social workers, finance officers, business managers, medical/dental personnel, civil engineers, etc.. With the advent of stronger college preparatory curriculum and career counseling at the high school, the number of Lagunas in these and other professions will undoubtedly increase.

Laguna has become acculturated to an extent although many of the traditions still prevail. However, the Pueblo's proximity to the urban areas of Albuquerque, Grants, and Gallup has speeded the process. The mass media (including the local paper,

THE RED TIMES}, has had an impact on the people of the Pueblo; television, radio, newspapers and magazines are found in many homes, and are very influential. There has been a widespread adoption of non-Indian priorities which has been and continues to be a cause of concern among some Tribal members. Most of the children are monolingual, English, although some understand a bit of Laguna. It is a very valid fear that this will lead in the future, to a further loss of traditions. Steps have been taken in the past to prevent this loss, but it is the responsibility of the individual family groups to teach the traditions and language; it cannot be mandated.

Even though some non-Indian priorities have been adopted, it seems that the reservation has so far escaped the "club-circuit". There are few civic organizations: veteran's organizations, ladies' church clubs, parent-teacher organizations, and athletic clubs.

The extended family is not a prevalent as it once was, but it is the hope of some Tribal leaders and members that this situation will be reversed in the future, perhaps with some of the elderly/child projects serving as models. While there are role models provided within the individual families, the schools and Tribal leaders also provide leadership models, as do the religious leaders of the community, be they Catholic, Protestant, or Native religion. Village meetings also provide an opportunity for the young people to observe and take part

in Tribal matters, although not too many avail themselves of the opportunity.

The strongest unifying forces on the reservation are the traditional religious activities and the strong matrilineal clan system. Both are active and important parts of life at Laguna.

The ethnic composition of the Pueblo consists of Indian and non-Indian. There have been a number of intermarriages between Lagunas and other Indians, Spanish, Anglo, Black, etc.. The children of these marriages are accepted: the general philosophy being "live and let live". People at Laguna tend to judge more on actions and performance than on who a person's parents are or where they come from.

However, prior to about 1973 or 1974 if a young person returned to the reservation and attempted to become involved in the Tribal government, he was judged on his age, and considered too young to be accepted. This has changed somewhat since then, and young people stand a better chance of acceptance when it comes to Tribal politics.

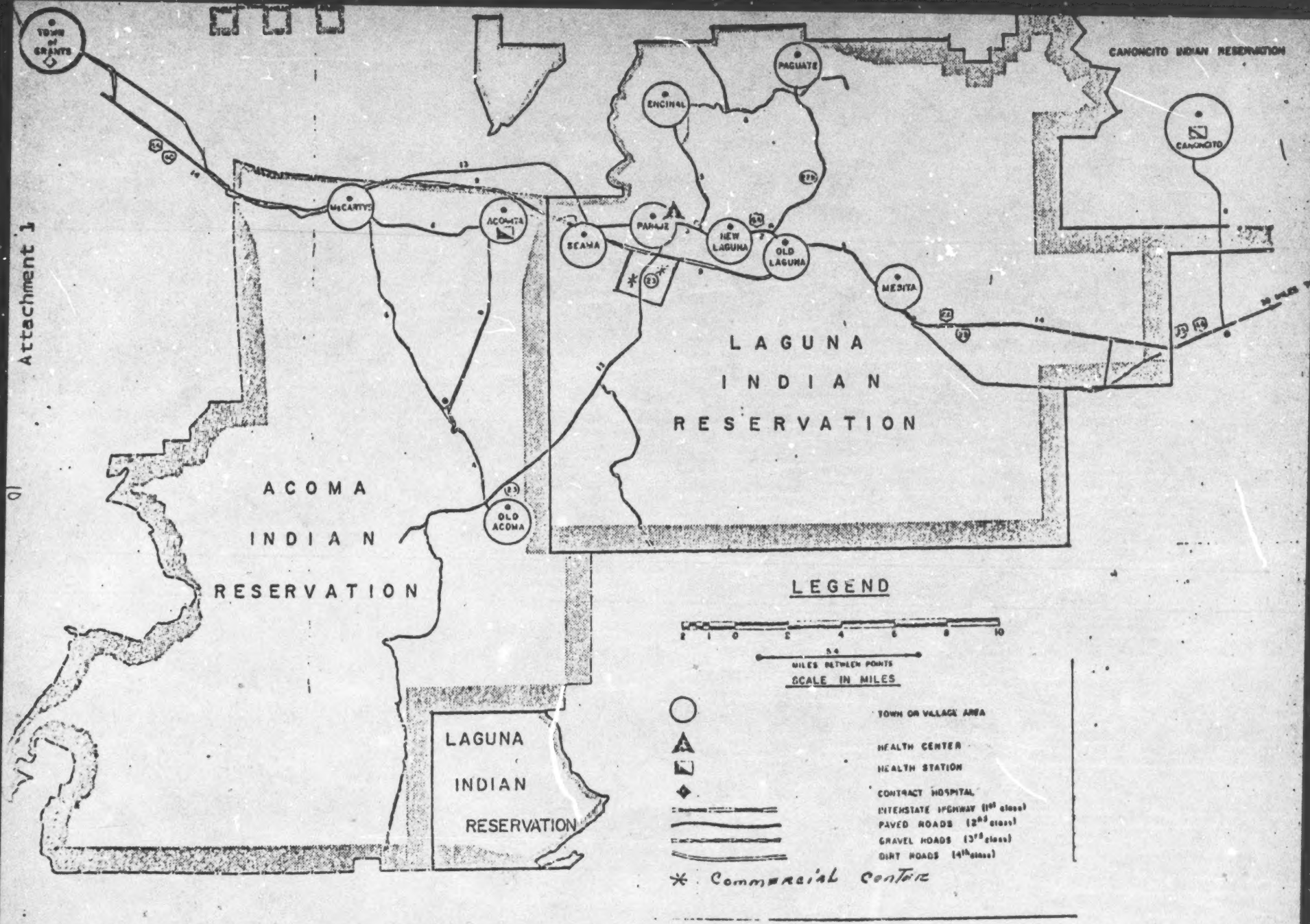
The Tribal government is headed by the Governor and a 21 member Tribal Council which includes two councilmen from each village, one staff officer from each village (including the Governor), the Tribal Secretary, Tribal Treasurer, and the Interpreter. The Tribal Secretary, Treasurer, Interpreter, and Governor are elected at large. The positions of First Lieutenant Governor and Second Lieutenant Governor, etc., are awarded to

those with the next highest votes.

Each new administration organizes its key personnel in its own manner (the present Governor's Organizational Chart may be seen as attachment number 5), but with the complexity of the running of the reservation and all Tribal interests, it may be assumed that the Governor will need a strong and competent support staff. Also found on the Organizational Chart is the route disputes follow: Village Officer, Tribal Courts, Appeals Court (Staff Officers), and as a final step, the Tribal Council. It is hoped that most disputes will be settled at the village level.

Each village also has a governing hierarchy with the Staff Officer and other Council Member at the head, followed by two Mayordomos, the Towncriers, Treasurer, and Collector. These officials handle village business locally unless the situation warrants further steps and consideration.

The Pueblo of Laguna is in a developmental stage: it is realizing its potential in the areas of natural resources, commercialism, and education. To continue to implement changes will require persistent, strong leadership and the support of the people. While it is impossible to please everyone, it is hoped that an equitable compromise can be reached between the new leadership and the traditionalists so that both can flourish and the costs will not be too great on either side.


Attachment 1
TOWN OF GRANTS
McCARTYS
ACOMITA
SEAMA
PAGUATE
ENCINAL
CANONCITO INDIAN RESERVATION
CANONCITO
PARAJE
NEW LAGUNA
OLD LAGUNA
MESITA
LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION
ACOMA INDIAN RESERVATION
OLD ACOMA
LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION
LEGEND
MILES BETWEEN POINTS
SCALE IN MILES
TOWN OR VILLAGE AREA
HEALTH CENTER
HEALTH STATION
CONTRACT HOSPITAL
INTERSTATE HIGHWAY (1st class)
PAVED ROADS (2nd class)
GRAVEL ROADS (3rd class)
DIRT ROADS (4th class)
* Commercial Center

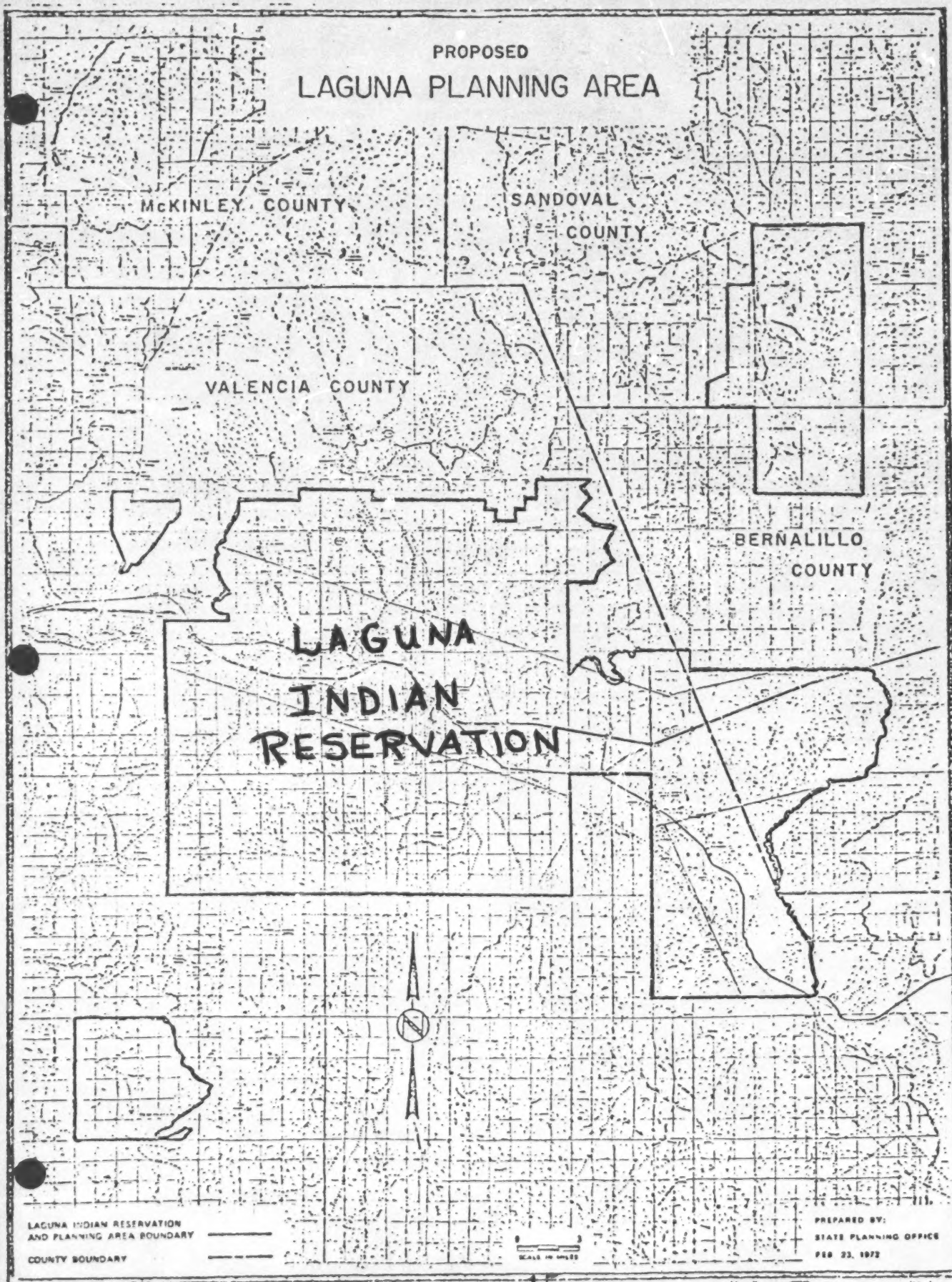

PROPOSED
LAGUNA PLANNING AREA
McKINLEY COUNTY
SANDOVAL COUNTY
VALENCIA COUNTY
BERNALILLO COUNTY
LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION
LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION AND PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY
COUNTY BOUNDARY
PREPARED BY:
STATE PLANNING OFFICE
FEB 23, 1972

TABLE 1

CONSOLIDATED POPULATION STATISTICS

JANUARY 1, 1978

	Laguna	Acoma	Total
Total Resident Population	6,059	3,403	9,462
Resident Population Age Groupings			
Under 16 years	2,060	1,262	3,322
16 - 24 years	1,301	698	1,999
25 - 34 years	919	490	1,409
35 - 44 years	659	348	1,007
45 - 64 years	722	409	1,131
65 years and over	398	196	594

SOURCE: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Southern Pueblos Agency

Non-Indians

Affiliated by Marriage	42
Laguna Elementary-BIA School	16
El Paso Natural Gas Co.	17
Transwestern Natural Gas Co.	6
Anaconda Mining Co.	40
L-A High School	44
	165
Other Indians	36
TOTAL	191
	201

Attachment 5

PUEBLO OF LAGUNA